

Mayor's Report
Tuesday, November 18, 2014
Deborah G. Owens

I am submitting this as my first Mayor's Report during my term as Mayor of the City of Battle Creek. I am honored to have been elected and recognize the services Mayor Walters provided this past year in leading this great City. Commissioner Walters is a valued member of the Battle Creek City Commission with history and expertise to help guide our future.

This Report is intended to keep the Commission and citizens apprised of activities of the Office of the Mayor. It is also an opportunity to provide additional information on activities or events occurring and affecting the people of this City.

Battle Creek has seated a City Commission, representing all areas of this City, who value the importance of working for the betterment of our City; who are responsive to the needs of our constituents and who value the importance of transparency and openness in your government — along with a strong commitment to citizen engagement and participation.

This past week was a time to reflect on our Veterans through many activities in our City, including the Annual Veteran's Day Ceremony at Fort Custer National Cemetery and an event hosted by Omni Community Credit Union whereby grant funds were donated to our local AMBUCS organization for the purchase of a trike for a disabled veteran.

Although it was an "off week" for City Commission meetings, we were busy in answering constituents' question and activities taking place in our City. Our next regular meeting will be Tuesday, Nov. 18, at 7 p.m., at City Hall.

This past Thursday the Commission met in a workshop where we were updated by Jim Hettinger on Battle Creek Unlimited. It was an opportunity to bring the Commission and citizens up-to-date on the economic impact BCU has had in our Industrial Park — now with 100 businesses located there, along with the work they have accomplished in the downtown area. Additionally, on the subject of economic development, I want to share with you that both Denso and Toda are actively engaged in expansions in Fort Custer. Both projects will result in both new capital investment as well as additional job creation.

We also have interest from three prospective businesses, who are considering locating in our city. If successful, this will further diversify our businesses and workforce.

As we move forward this Commission year, let me share with you issues we will be undertaking. We want to assure that our community is "business friendly," so the Commission will soon be meeting on issues surrounding the Code and Inspection Divisions' activities and processes. Also, with the Consolidated Plan completed, a many-pronged approach to improving our

neighborhoods will be under way. And, of course, we will continue our efforts in the area of economic development, not only in the Industrial Park and Downtown, but in our business corridors throughout the City.

Vice Mayor Gray and I are working very closely in showing solidarity in our leadership. I will continue to provide bi-monthly Mayor's Reports to both the Commission and citizenry (available on City's website); a weekly "Battle Creek Report" during the *Battle Creek Hour* on WBCK; and establishment of office hours at City Hall. Vice Mayor Gray and I are establishing bi-monthly coffee hours in each of the five Wards. A formalized press release from City Hall will be disseminated very soon.

The month of November has been proclaimed "Native American Heritage Month." The Proclamation was presented at the Hart-Dole-Inouye Federal Center with guest speaker Ray Cadotte, who took us on a journey through the fascinating history and rich culture of the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe.

I was pleased to attend the "Shop with a Cop" fundraiser with members of the Michigan State Police, Calhoun County Sheriff's Department, Battle Creek Police Department, Emmett Township Public Safety and Kellogg Community College Police Academy. The actual "Shop with a Cop" event will occur in December.

Saturday, Nov. 22, 2014, kicks off the International Festival of Lights. A Public Holiday Open House will be held from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. at Burnham Brook Community Center. Activities will include free photos with Santa, refreshments and Brass Band ticket giveaway. This is a free event in partnership with the IFOL and Battle Creek Community Foundation. The Holiday Parade will follow this event at 6 p.m., in downtown Battle Creek.

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah G. Owens

Deborah G. Owens, Mayor